



KILL THE BILL



INDIAN FARMERS' PROTEST



LOUISE MICHEL & THE PARIS COMMUNE

BLACK STAR ★



Solidarity with the Struggle Against Dictatorship in Myanmar

Anarchists in Northern Ireland extend our support and solidarity to comrades in Myanmar who have been fighting the brutal military repression of the state every day since the coup of 1 February. Dozens have now been killed in attacks by the police and army on demonstrators across the country, and anarchists involved with Social Justice Yangon (the biggest city), have played a full and active part in resisting the return to dictatorship, just as they fought against the dictatorial policies and oppression of Aung San Suu Kyi's 'democratic' government. Supporters of that government, of course, are calling on the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and others and a return to democracy, the same 'liberal democracy' that murdered, raped and displaced well over a million of the Rohingya people since 2017. *(continued on page 2)*

Northern Anarchist News from Organise!

‘The military operate
according to the Rule
of Law’

Aung San Suu Kyi
on the Rohingya
genocide.

As founding member of Social Justice Yangon, Aung Kaung Myat noted in 2018, Aung San Suu Kyi had shown her true colours years before. Released from house arrest in 2010, in 2012 she chaired the Letpadaung Investigation Commission which looked into the actions of a Chinese state-owned mining company that had forcibly displaced over a thousand villagers, and used white phosphorus against those protesting. The copper mine at Letpadaung, in the northwest of Myanmar, has been the scene of long-running disputes and is jointly owned by the Wanbao Mining company and the Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings (a wing of the Myanmar military). Aung San Suu Kyi's report came after a visit to the mine where she told the villagers to respect the 'rule of law' and sacrifice their lands for the good of the nation. A strike by trainees at the mine in 2014 joined by the villagers resulted in further violence from the owners in which several protesters were shot, something Aung San Suu Kyi blamed on her report not having been fully implemented.

There could be no clearer illustration of the thin curtain that divides one form of state power from another than in Myanmar. More and more people there have seen through it and their ongoing resistance is testament to that as well as to the resilience and determination of the working class not to yield to the dictatorship of the military.

Indian Farmers' Protest



Predictably, the mainstream Indian media in their fawning embrace of the ultra nationalist government of Narendra Modi, have been working overtime to depict the Indian farmers' protest as 'anarchist' and 'Maoist' at the same time! The protests began after Modi's regime passed three farm acts last September designed to open up farmers' produce to wider markets

and remove minimum pricing formerly guaranteed to even the poorest farmers. The aim is largely to kill off smaller farms and transform agriculture into big business, involving corporations, land speculation and wholesale privatisation in a country where food poverty is still widespread. It's estimated that about 189 million people in India are undernourished out of a population of just over 1.3 billion. Therefore, these sort of changes mean not only social dislocation, unemployment and poverty, but growing hunger, malnutrition and death.

Not that Modi gives a flying fuck obviously. He has met the mass protests of over 100,000 farmers with water cannons, gas, rubber bullets and live rounds. It's estimated that around 250 protesters have been killed so far by the authorities.

The farmers have set up their own schools in the protest camps and are engaged in a wide variety of mutual aid in the midst of all this struggle. They have been joined by anarchist comrades from the MEM anarchist-syndicalist group and received support from the Workers' Solidarity Initiative in Karachi in Pakistan as well as from the IWA-AIT affiliate in Bangladesh, the Anarcho-Syndicalist Federation there.



Farmers' Union calls for end to the Agricultural Wages Board.



With over a fifth of all agricultural labourers in Northern Ireland coming from Europe and being paid amongst the worst in any sector for back-breaking work, the Ulster Farmers' 'Union' have said it's now time to abolish the Agricultural Wages Board.

Apparently it causes an unnecessary 'regulatory and administrative burden on agricultural businesses'.

Kill the Bill Riot in Bristol



Walking home on the evening of the 3rd of March, Sarah Everard was kidnapped and murdered by an off duty cop. A vigil held for her in her hometown of London was then violently attacked by police. With tension, frustration and legitimate anger rising subsequent protests took place against the draconian *Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill* in Bristol (and elsewhere).

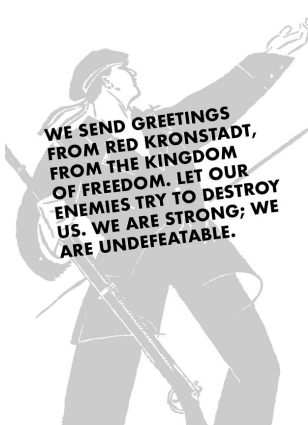
The protests that took place in Bristol bring up a few issues that should at least make us pause for thought.

As sometimes happens, at some point the protests turned violent, becoming what are usually called 'riots'. In instances where riots take place it often leads to reactions from the left in general, and anarchists - less commonly - that should be considered twice. Broadly speaking, due to the fear of protests being labelled illegitimate by journalists and the fear of losing the support of the public, we tend to either focus on the role the cops played, arguing that they 'started it' - as usually happens -, or by

arguing that those who engage in 'violence' (by throwing stones or other objects) or property damage are wrong. The third option usually involves blaming, whether right or not, 'an agent provocateur'. Sometimes this is accompanied with the public sharing of pictures of protesters. This has the dangerous potential of casting genuine protestors as police infiltrators - not to mention the reality that these images can be used by the police themselves as evidence. This shows us that for some (perhaps many) it is a very challenging exercise to even consider the possibility of riots as a tactic. Those who fiercely claim that riots can, where they emerge, eclipse the goals of the protests, should perhaps devote less lines to demonstrating the peaceful nature of 'most demonstrators'. In the rush to appear 'legitimate' in the eyes of capitalist society, the left completes the work of the state. Robbing 'violent' protestors of even the possibility that to riot can be legitimate. This, at least tacitly accepts that the state is the only agent that can legitimate use violence to further its goals. Instead, it might be useful to just accept that in demonstrations, no matter how clearly the goals are stated, people participate with different aims, and differing views of how to achieve common goals. For some, riots are a way to defend themselves against the brutality of the state, but also, a way to make demands to be heard.

Centenaries, centenaries

The wee North's 'decade of centenaries'tm is reaching its zenith with the upcoming 100th birthday of Northern Ireland. Well for some it's partition but one 'man's' creation myth is another 'man's' irreformable Orange state(let). For now we're not getting into the nature of reforms here, which have gone hand in hand with copper-fastened parity of sectarianism. We'd rather introduce you to a couple of centenaries and noteworthy anniversaries of our own - plucked from the rich history of working-class struggles for freedom rather than cherrypicked to reinforce one nationalist project or another.



This month we have the anniversary of the birth of Rudolph Rocker, the centenary of both the death of Peter Kropotkin and the final death of the hopes of the proletarian revolution in Russia with the suppression of the Kronstadt Uprising at the hands of the Bolsheviks. It's also the 150th anniversary of the great experiment in working-class power, the Paris Commune. A centenary and a half!

150 Years Since the Paris Commune



'It is not a question of breadcrumbs. What is at stake is the harvest of an entire world, a harvest necessary to the whole future human race, one without exploiters and without exploited.'
Louise Michel.

This March saw 150 years since the start of the short-lived experiment in autonomous workers' control in the Paris Commune. 'Socialists' of various persuasions have used the anniversary to trot out the same lies about Proudhon as usual to try and undermine the popularity that anarchist and mutualist ideas had in 1871.

Everyone knows about Louise Michel's involvement and her famous reproof to her judges 'if you are not cowards, kill me!' but less is known about some of other women and men of that historic defence of the workers. These included the later anarchists and syndicalists, Noémie and Elie Reclus, the latter a person who lived in Ireland for a time, Eliska Vincent, Maxime Négro and others, all supporters of Proudhonist ideas as well as feminists. As Kropotkin would later write 'the Commune could be nothing but a first attempt', though it is one well worth remembering.

Meanwhile in Ballymena...

Great to see issue 3 of *Black Star* after so many years! As someone from the Ballymena group that put together the first two I was gobsmacked and astounded when this popped up in my bored internet search for anarchist publications from here! That reprinted article brought back memories.

I mean I'm obviously biased but it was a breath of fresh air in the stilted and hopeless atmosphere of the Covid-lockdown 21st century. It compares well to the other local anarchist propaganda I've come across. I was heartened to find another local publication with an excellent set of Aims and Principles but was badly let down with their repetition of the tired old line about working class communities demanding punishment beatings. The WSM seem, unfortunately, to have been reduced to a retweeting news-service. There's also a magazine with a weird name coming out of Dublin - a bit of a long read using this shitty wee smart phone.

I'm back in lockdown Ballymena on account of being caught out by the first lockdown when I was home visiting the folks. I wasn't quick enough to take advantage of the temporary lull and I've been 'home' for much too long now. I needed some funds scraped together and ended up working for the Ballygalgormless. But of course that didn't last long. 'Let go' with no furlough pay. So now I've borrowed a van and I'm doing removals for folk. Took a while to get the hang of our infamous wee one way system after so long. But like they say, its like riding a bike.

The van's second (twentieth) hand and has had numerous not so

careful drivers. Worst thing though is the radio. It's stuck on Q Radio. That'll seriously be the death of me.

The shite I've been subjected to. The no signposts roadmap out of the pandemic. Led by the science those uns up at Stormont tell us. C'mon, sure Michelle let the cat out of the bag within a couple of days. There are no dates to trip these eejits up so they can just copy the big boys and girls at the Dail and Westminster. Anything else would open them up to too much flak. Though that's actually quite clever of them. In a sleekit way.

Trocaire's latest 'charm' offensive is offensive as fuck too. Straight after the mother and baby homes scandals rocks the Church their 'charitable' wing tries to muster sympathy with 'until love conquers fear'. Tell that to those who were in yer care. As for 'it's not just', no it's not, neither is the legacy of Church sponsored imperialism. To top it all off I've had to endure Jim Allister on repeat talking unbelievable shite about 'human rights' and the 'bringing of death to the womb' - death to him and his bigoted ilk can't come too soon.

As I sit here tapping this into my phone with one digit (parked up waiting on another run), I'm being bombarded with International Women's Day waffle. Ach, of course that should be a good thing, but these clamps at Q Radio have turned it into a cross between Mother's Day and Valentine's Day. As far removed from International Working Women's Day and the labouring and socialist women who brought us it as could be imagined.

Oh christ, fucking 'Drivers Licence' is on for the 200th time today! I'm off to take a hammer to this radio! See yez, and remember the bosses need us - we don't need them!

WANKER!



Boris Johnson applauded frontline health workers but when it came to putting money where his big gob is it's 'fuck off, we can't afford you'! This is exactly the type of thinking that left us with a health service that was already on the brink before the pandemic. Boris is a crony of capitalism plain and simple. We won't have a health system fit for service until we get shot of him and his ilk.

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LETTER

To whom it may concern,

In response to your '1000 Corpse Virtual Protest' article in issue 3, may I highlight an inconsistency in the Unionist argument for purging 'dead' voters from the register. Do they not often argue that 'the unborn' have rights? As such, the 'unliving' should be extended those same rights under the GFA principle of 'parity of esteem'.

I also understand that the not-yet-dead are ineligible to join the Democratic Undead Protest Coalition - may I be the first to suggest a supporters' alliance, the Democratic Undead Protest Supporters' Alliance Coalition. I feel 'DUPSAC' has a nice ring to it, though I fear it may be turned into a pejorative insult by opponents.

Sincerely

Hamish MacDonagh

